

# The Avocet



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Due to COVID precautions and USFWS staff regulations, the 2022 Monte Vista Crane Festival will be a hybrid format with limited in-person events along with an online program for speaking events and other presentations. Tours will be offered, but instead of school bus transportation,

festival attendees will drive themselves to rendezvous locations where they will be met by expert volunteers, or agency staff, for the tour. Many of the tours are sold out.

Rather than meet in person, the Crane Festival Committee asked guest speakers to record their presentations. You can watch these videos ON DEMAND for FREE from March 11 thru March 20th. We hope you will enjoy the modified format. This year's presentations include interesting information about wildlife use of abandoned mines along the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Flammulated Owls at the Hot Creek Research Natural Area in the San Luis Valley, and raptor education by Hawks Aloft.

When the cranes are asleep and you are looking for something to watch, or you stayed home this year and need some new entertainment, the Crane Festival Committee collected some old and some new video segments about birds, birding, and the San Luis Valley, to entertain you. Some fantastic journalists and videographers have shared their work to entertain, educate and inform you. Registering for a ticket will give you access to these videos beginning March 11 through March 20th.

The Craft Fair presented by the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce will be taking place in the BRAND NEW Ski Hi building on Friday and Saturday March 11-12.

Award-winning professional nature photographer and Friends of Refuge member Ed MacKerrow will again offer photography workshops during the 2022 Monte Vista Crane Festival. Three one-day workshops will be offered each day, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, March 11 – 13, 2022.

For more information and tickets, please visit the website: [mvcranefest.org](http://mvcranefest.org)



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and  
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**Email:**  
[friendslvnwr@gmail.com](mailto:friendslvnwr@gmail.com)



Thank you O&V for  
continued support

# President's Message—Deb Callahan



Ready-set-go. It's a busy time of the year for the Friends. We are coordinating all of the pieces that come together to make the 2022 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Monte Vista Crane Festival. This event is the Friends' largest and most ambitious event centered around sandhill crane migration and the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge.

A recent development for the Friends is the newly formed Rocky Mountain Population Sandhill Crane Coalition. Key people from three locations along the migration route of the Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) of Greater Sandhill Cranes are coming together on Zoom to brainstorm how we can support the majestic sandhill cranes.

Jenny Nehring (vice-president of the Friends), Suzanne Beauchaine, Refuge Manager of the Alamosa and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and Friends liaison, and myself, represent the San Luis Valley and the Monte Vista Crane Festival (MVCF). We have had two meetings with Deb Caldwell, Executive Director of the Friends of the Bosque del Apache NWR (BDA) in central New Mexico and Nancy Merrill and Erin Gelling of the Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition (CCCC) of the Yampa Valley. Each of these organizations have crane festivals; MVCF in March, CCCC in September and BDA in November to celebrate cranes and educate the public.

The Yampa Valley, in northern Colorado, represents the northern-most location where Greater Sandhill Cranes nest and stopover during their spring and fall migrations. The Monte Vista NWR and San Luis Valley is a major stop over for the cranes during their migrations. And the Bosque del Apache NWR and Middle Rio Grande is where the majority of the RMP cranes winter.

The group is brainstorming how we can ENGAGE, EDUCATE and EMPOWER the public to support cranes and keep them strong for the next thousands of years (or until the next asteroid hits us: if you haven't seen the movie *Don't Look Up*, you should watch it). We are discussing creating a GIS Story. A GIS Story is an automated story presenting facts, photos and videos on a map and will ENGAGE and EDUCATE the public about sandhill cranes and the locations each of us represent. The EMPOWER would include sample letters, postcards to be distributed to folks to send to legislators about important issues that affect cranes and asking for support of programs that support food for cranes such as the "Crops for Cranes" program of the CCCC. The San Luis Valley Friends will be looking EMPOWER it's visitors by providing information to our 2022 festival visitors about the proposed San Luis Valley water export plan and how they can voice their concerns to Douglas County about the impacts to the valley and the cranes. Stay tuned as plans develop from these power meetings.

To watch an example of a story map about Cranes and the San Luis Valley, go to this link: <https://bit.ly/3H1EdBo>



Canada Geese take flight above the Rio Grande on the Malm Trail in Alamosa.

## Water Concerns

At a time when the Valley aquifers are falling to historic lows, and there are plans to get recharge into those aquifers, a proposal to take water from the Valley to meet the growing needs of front range cities is a cause for concern.

Maintaining and recharging our aquifers should result in sustainable agriculture and protection of wetland habitats. If wetlands become less effective, what will be the results for birds? To read more about this, you can find more information online at [alamosacitizen.com](http://alamosacitizen.com) and search "water fight".



# Toivo Malm Trail Dedication



After the dedication, John Rawinski lead a bird walk and discussed rabbitbrush and flickers.



At Martha's River Rest, Linda Malm and her husband Donn, rest on the Rio Grande on the Alamosa NWR.



What's in a name? A daughter's love for her father. The new Toivo Malm Trail connects the residents of the City of Alamosa to precious public land in their backyard, the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge. Linda Malm connected with staff at Alamosa Refuge with a desire to dedicate a memorial to her father and family that would have a large impact on conservation and connecting people to nature. What a difference she has made! Little did she know strong partnerships and planning on a valley wide scale to connect people to the outdoors were already in place. The Refuge partnered with San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (SLVGO) and the City to make Linda's dream a reality. A ribbon cutting to open the trail officially occurred on September 16, 2021. The trail, since it's completion, has become a top ten eBird birding site in Colorado, already recording 129 species, including the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Donald Valdez (D. CO-03) spoke about community.



The Refuge continues to partner with the City of Alamosa, SLVGO, and added the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Group to secure funding to remove all of the car bodies, concrete, asphalt, tires, etc from the riverbank and to re-contour the riverbank to provide safe access to fish and riparian habitat for birds including the Southwest Willow Flycatcher.

Donald Valdez and John Rawinski



the Southwest Willow Flycatcher.



Linda Malm and Mick Daniels (SLVGO) cutting the ribbon to officially open the Malm Trail while Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman and Alamosa Parks and Recreation staff assist.



Alamosa City Mayor Ty Coleman



The Partners on Ginny's Crossing, the key to establishing the trail. Front to Back: Linda Malm, Mick Daniels (SLVGO), Andy Rice (Alamosa Parks and Recreation), Sharon Vaughn (SLVNWR Complex Project Leader), John Ressor (Alamosa Parks and Recreation).





Well it has been a long time coming, but a decision was finally made on my Rare Bird Report from 3 years ago. First of all, some explanations.

On September 7, 2018, I was leading a group of 10 Valley birders on a day of birding across the San Luis Valley. As the day was nearly complete and we drove back from Cat Creek, Lisa Clements and I spotted a dead, road-killed bird on the side of the road. At Lisa's urging, we backed up and took a look. Our group began examining the bird in hand, though it had begun to decompose. It took some examination and time to try to figure it out. But together we determined it to be a Jaeger species, a bird never recorded previously in the San Luis Valley. We surmised it was hit by a vehicle. Wow, what a find! And what was it, this sea-going bird of wide open oceans, doing in the dry hill slopes of Cat Creek Canyon?

The specimen was collected and turned over to Adams State University. But not before numerous photos and measurements were taken. After lengthy analysis, I submitted a Colorado Rare Bird Report complete with detailed descriptions and photos. For those of you who are not sure what that is, it is a complete description and documentation with photos, recordings or other data that clearly and unequivocally identifies a specific bird species. For some birds like a Black Phoebe, that is very straight forward process. But for Jaeger species and considering juveniles, the process of documentation comes down to accurate and detailed descriptions of individual feathers. size, measurements, feather edgings, degree of pointedness of tail retrices, the number of primary feathers having a white shaft, and things like that. The report was pages long.

A committee, the Colorado Birds Records Committee (CBRC), then reviews the report and decides if there was sufficient documentation to support the identified bird. I have served on this committee in past years and can tell you it is a difficult and thankless job — lots of work, lots of criticism, and no awards or thanks. But the job is important so that Colorado can maintain an accurate and viable list of species seen in the State (the State List).

The CBRC voted to approve my documentation for Long-tailed Jaeger by a vote of 7-0. This adds an approved new species to the San Luis Valley bird list! Hurrah!

Long-tailed Jaeger is a bird that breeds in the arctic circle. Though most of its life



The group that found this amazing bird quite by accident and by being observant.

is spent flying over the wide ocean, it sometimes migrates inland far from water. That might explain its occurrence in the dry landscape of Cat Creek. Colorado birders usually report a few of these each fall, mostly on the front range lakes and plains. It can migrate as far south as South America oceans.



Rare juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger

So the story is now completed and we can unequivocally add this bird to the San Luis Valley bird list. The San Luis Valley total is now 360 species.

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## An Assessment of the Bird Mortality from the 2020 Summer Snowstorm in the San Luis Valley, Colorado By John J. Rawinski

On September 8-9, 2020, an abnormally cold snowstorm descended on the San Luis Valley covering most of the valley with deep snow and freezing temperatures. Alamosa reported 15 inches (38 cm) of snow in this strange summer storm. Temperatures plummeted from 87 degrees F (30.5 C) to 27 degrees F (-2.8 C) the next day. The drastic changes in weather conditions had direct impacts to both migratory and resident songbirds that resulted in widespread bird deaths. Based on mortality data collected by multiple individuals, I believe that the storm had direct, primary and acute impacts causing significant bird mortality in the San Luis Valley. Conservatively, I estimate that 11,500 birds died along the paved and plowed highways due to vehicle collisions, and that the death count at local residences could exceed 100,000. This comes at a time when bird populations have declined by 3 billion birds in North America over the last 50 years (Rosenberg et al. 2019).

To read the rest of this study in the Winter 2022 edition of Colorado Birds (Vol. 56 No. 1), the link can be found online on our [Friends Website](https://bit.ly/3G0qYQc). or type <https://bit.ly/3G0qYQc>



# Where Have All the Birds Gone? a.k.a. the 122<sup>nd</sup> Audubon Christmas Bird Count — Lisa Clements



Christmas Bird Count Rough-legged Hawk

The 64<sup>th</sup> annual Monte Vista Christmas Bird Count was held the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 under sunny skies with no wind. A blue bird day, but for the lack of bluebirds, or indeed, very many other species. A total of 11 people (7 teams) drove 338 miles, mostly completely covering the count circle. A few walked for a total of 3 miles. The temperature ranged from 1F to 38 F. There was not much snow depth, but what there was completely covered the circle and the water ways were mostly frozen.

After 6 hours, we found a total of 43 species, a low number, and 2549 total individuals, also a

disappointingly low number. However, there were some bright notes in this year's count. Best birds were Northern Shrike, Prairie Falcon, Peregrine Falcon, the Short-eared Owl was seen again this year, and new to the count – during count week – were three Sora !

Thanks to Suzanne Beauchaine, Evert and Tammy Brown, Linda Cozart, Beth Kinney, John and Lisa Rawinski and Brian and Diane Underwood, and to Deb Callahan for again hosting the Zoom meeting after party, where we talked about the low number of species and attempted to identify pictures of unknown birds.

Next year's count is December 17. Hopefully we won't have to observe Covid protocols next time for the 65<sup>th</sup> Monte Vista Christmas Bird Count. See you then.

*Continued on page 12*



Malm Trail Animals: Beaver damage on elm, Great Horned Owl (bird number 98 on my Malm Trail "life list"), Green-wing Teal bathing, Mule deer hiding, drake Mallard sings to his hen.



Christmas Bird Count Red-tail Hawk



# Refuge Events



Saturday, Aug 14 – Baca NWR Open House

Thank you Peter Schlegel and Deb Callahan for the photos.



Saturday, Oct 9 – Friends Workday at Monte Vista NWR

Several Friends met to remove 2 miles of high tensile electric wire fence. It is/was a hazard to livestock in rotation and wildlife. Lunch was provided by the Clark's, who are the permittees.



Safety talk



Sheep skull



A pile of wire



A blustery morning turned into promise



The 'right' way to roll wire



Suzanne and Deb pose with a mile of rolled wire





## Elk Distribution/Dispersal Project in the San Luis Valley – Doug Ouren

Human wildlife conflicts can result in property damage, potential disease spillover, financial loss, and decrease in tolerance of wildlife. Increasing elk (*Cervus canadensis*) populations and land use changes in the western United States are challenging resource managers tasked with managing this conflict. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Habitat Partnership Program (HPP) was developed to build partnerships aimed at reducing conflicts caused by deer, elk, pronghorn and moose to agriculture. Currently the HPP, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's San Luis Valley Refuge Complex (SLVRC) and the National Park Service, is working on a project to promote sustainable elk distribution throughout the area.

The SLVRC and the National Park Service's Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve (GRSA) unintentionally provide valuable habitat for elk. The Alamosa refuge attracts approximately 100 elk on a seasonal basis; the Monte Vista Refuge attracts around 300 elk on a seasonal and year round basis; and the Baca National Wildlife Refuge attracts approximately 1,500 elk on an annual basis and contributes seasonal habitat for an additional 1,000 elk. GRSA also contributes year round/seasonal habitat for approximately 1000 elk. While providing habitat is important, concentrated elk populations can cause damage to sensitive habitats and croplands.

Historically elk populations and distribution have been controlled by various predators including mountain lions, bears and humans. As human development has increased, habitat connectivity has eroded, leaving the clear connection between natural prey base, including elk, and their predators unbalanced. The result of this relationship is that the distribution of these elk populations become concentrated leading to potential degradation of ecologically sensitive areas along with the additional potential for negative impacts to surrounding agricultural lands.

A major objective of this project is to use a combination of strategies to redistribute elk away from potential conflict zones and away from ecologically sensitive areas across the landscape. Strategies utilized to affect elk distribution included non-lethal and lethal hazing methods. Non-lethal methods included hazing via foot and motorized vehicle use. The key to non-lethal hazing is persistence of effort. Trained volunteers and hunters were used to increase hazing effectiveness and assist in population reduction - both of which are key to overall elk dispersal and distribution. All harvested elk feed the volunteers' families or are donated to CPW-selected programs.

The results of this ongoing pilot project have been a better understanding of how to effectively use a combination lethal and nonlethal dispersal strategies for elk; and a step towards building a foundation for future efforts. To measure project effectiveness, this project is also utilizing geographic information systems and global positioning systems technology along with database development and analysis to create baseline information on elk distribution in the area and effectiveness of hazing methods. In addition, NPS personnel are sampling harvested animals for chronic wasting disease and COVID. Lessons learned from this HPP project can be used by other HPP committees to provide insight on potential methodologies to assist in current or future elk distribution efforts.



## American Bittern — Evert Brown

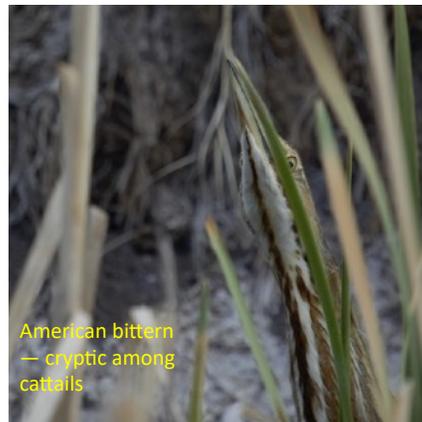


American bittern hunting

A common bird to the San Luis Valley Refuge Complex is the American bittern, *Botaurus lentiginosus*. They belong to the order Pelecaniformes, which includes pelicans, cormorants, egrets, and ibises. Bitterns are herons (Family Ardeidae) and fly with their head crooked back toward their shoulders. They are slightly larger than night-herons with long green legs and a long thick neck. When they are standing upright, their brown and white streaks mimic marsh vegetation patterns. They are known

to sway with the wind like the cattails among them. Their cryptic brown colors set them apart from the grays and whites of other local herons. Bitterns stand upright with their beak in the air, their eyes watching around both sides of the beak. When they move, they hunker down with a very slow methodical, almost stalking march. I have never seen one run. In this low position, they can disappear very quickly into the vegetation, but if you keep watching, they may reappear close by. Be patient; camouflage is one of their better defenses and they are well adapted for our refuges.

More often heard than seen, bitterns are a secretive, solitary bird. Males have a distinctive gulping “pa-lunk-a-lunk – pa-lunk-a-lunk” call during the breeding season. This low frequency drumming sound travels long



American bittern — cryptic among cattails



Male American bittern in breeding plumage. Females are smaller and not as colorful.

distances to attract females to a lek that a male has staked out. During the breeding season, males have white epaulets on their shoulders and dark plumage on the top of an outstretched neck that stands out during courtship. Breeding season occurs in May and June in our valley. Leks seem to be established in more open areas. When a female comes to a lek, the male will perform a dance that I call the “head-down-bob-and-weave”, to wow the female. After a brief copulation, females typically nest close to the lek. Males are not known to be involved in any parental care. Nests are constructed on leafy mounds built-up several inches above the water, according to the literature. Eggs are beige-brown to olive in color and unmarked. Females produce a clutch of 2–7 eggs that hatch in 24–28 days and ultimately produce altricial young with olive eyes, a pinkish-tan black-tipped bill, and yellow-green down. Young will be up and out of the nest in a couple of weeks and stay close by, mooching off mom. It is not

known exactly when chicks first fledge. In the summer of 2021, I observed a clutch of four chicks at the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge east loop ponds where they flew around for a week or so. I think they left when mom did.

Bitterns move slowly and deliberately among the rushes and cattails to feed on invertebrates, fish, small snakes, and tadpoles. I once saw a bittern, on a refuge road, pecking at a stiff road-killed mouse. It was not a successful dinner and the bittern wandered off back down into the rushes.

I suspect bitterns will start arriving to our valley in May and will be here until late September. A good time to see, or hear, these magnificent birds is in early morning or evening twilight. They are common and their conservation status is considered at low risk in Colorado. Status in other states may be more concerning. When you are looking for them, look for something very slightly different among the cattails and rushes – a different color tone or shape. When you find one, know that it saw you first and will not stay in position for you long. You might see them on the road. A bittern may pose for you for a moment, thinking you can't see them because they are so still. It eventually catches on and slowly moves away.



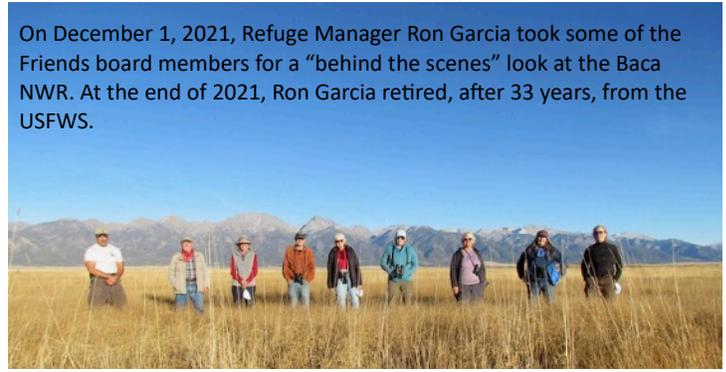
American bittern in flight. Note head retracted toward body, typical of herons. And look at those feet!



# Refuge Events, continued



Ron explains about raised culverts



On December 1, 2021, Refuge Manager Ron Garcia took some of the Friends board members for a "behind the scenes" look at the Baca NWR. At the end of 2021, Ron Garcia retired, after 33 years, from the USFWS.



Raised culvert and frozen creek



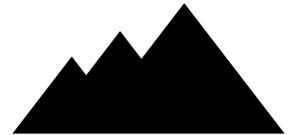
Sale Barn and creek



Bison stray all the time from the Nature Conservancy property to the Baca Refuge.



The Baca Refuge has 8-10,000 acres of grass hay meadows. They rotate and hay about a third of that each year. The meadows are under water part of the year.



On July 1, 2021, FWS archeology specialist Meg Van Ness took a group of friends and Refuge staff on the Scott Miller site to talk about the history of it. Oh, and collect some artifacts.



When you find it, flag it



'Wild' sheep graze the site



Found it !



What we found. Eleven artifacts — some points and an awl



Having found it, we GPS it



## Peggy Jo Blenden 1955-2021 A Good Friend

Long-time Friends member Peggy Jo Blenden died on November 11, 2021 while visiting family in Columbia, Missouri, she was 65. She lived with her husband and former San Luis Valley Refuges Project Leader, Michael Blenden, in Del Norte, Colorado. Her death was due to unexpected heart failure.

Peggy was born in Fulton, Missouri and her childhood was spent riding her horse, exploring her family's small farm and adventuring along her cherished rivers in the Missouri Ozarks with her immediate and extended family. She attended the University of Missouri, where she earned Bachelors and Masters of Science degrees from the School of Forestry, Fisheries and Wildlife and she met Mike during graduate school.

Peggy had many passions. She was a tireless reader, and devoted herself to homeschooling and working with public schools to allow her sons Robin and Ian the best education possible. Her lifelong love of plants was filled with identifying, admiring and photographing wildflowers throughout the Missouri forests, the northern Great Plains, Alaskan tundra and southern Rocky Mountains. She brought her vegetable and flower gardening skills with her everywhere she lived. She gave her cats and dogs the best lives imaginable, possibly even spoiling them. She loved both national and international travel, especially when birding was involved. Peggy was an essential part of the Monte Vista Christmas Bird Count. Her cooking and baking interests and skills were epic.

She was a committed conservationist, volunteering countless hours to the National Wildlife Refuge System, Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges, Monte Vista Crane Festival, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, and Jefferson County Library system. The Friends especially remember Peggy's generosity hosting our annual potluck Christmas party at her home, preparing a turkey and incredible desserts (plural!). For many years Peggy took on the thankless task of planning and coordinating the craft fair for the Monte Vista Crane Festival including sewing more than 15 large crane banners to be hung at the old Ski Hi facility to dress up that tired building. She will be missed!

A celebration of life will be planned and advertised at a later date. Please consider making memorial contributions to the Conour Animal Shelter, 2825 Sherman Ave., P.O. Box 369, Monte Vista, CO 81144, [urgasconouranimalshelter.org](http://urgasconouranimalshelter.org), 719-852-3366 or The San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society, 76 El Rio Drive, Alamosa, CO, [slvaws.org](http://slvaws.org), 719-587-9663.



Broad-tailed and Rufous Hummingbirds - La Garita



### Another Good Friend – May Engquist

May Engquist, San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council board member and a friend of the Friends of the SLV National Wildlife Refuges, passed away in October 2021. SLVEC Director Chris Canaly, said May was a wonderful SLVEC supporter and board member for well over a decade. She participated with so many critical issues that posed a threat to the environment of the San Luis Valley, such as the exploratory drilling proposal on the Baca National Wildlife Refuge, and our 2008 challenge in court, going to many of those hearings in Denver. Locally, May participated in the Solid Waste Audit at the SLV Landfill She attended all of our Task Force meetings regarding the development of a recycling infrastructure for the SLV.

She commented and followed up on the Rio Grande Forest Plan and most recently informed the Saguache County Commissioners regarding wildlife corridors in support of wildlife connectivity. The Saguache County commissioners passed the resolution to protect wildlife corridors as a result of her emails and well informed comments.

There's been so much activity and genuine support for public lands legacy that May embraced, and enjoyed, and she stepped up many times. Many blessings your way May, peace and love be with you. You will be missed by all who knew you.



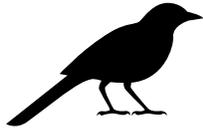
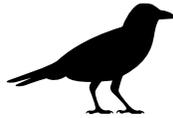


# Welcome New Members and Thank You Renewing Members

The following people have joined or renewed their Friends Membership since our last newsletter:

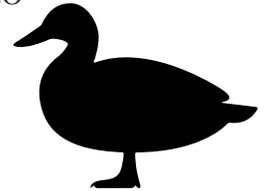
## New Members

- Karuna Eberl, Hooper, CO
- Helen Larsen, Santa Fe, NM
- Kirsten Scott, Steamboat Springs, CO
- Rebecca Herman, Pagosa Springs, CO
- John Page-Cooper, University City, MO
- Alan & Jamie Myers, Edwardsville, KS
- Larry & Loretta Hares, Crestone, CO
- Allene Evans & Tom Herod, Austin, TX
- Christie Barton & Zack Reuter, Moffat, CO
- Peter & Leah Clark, Monte Vista, CO
- Wilson Dooley, Prescott, AZ
- Theresa Braymer, Arvada, CO
- Leslie Klusmire, Monte Vista, CO



## Renewing Members

- Evert Brown, Alamosa, CO
- Dr. John Tooker, Mechanicsburg, PA
- Victoria Hemsli, Denver, CO
- Linda Cozart, Alamosa, CO
- Larry Calloway, Crestone, CO
- Heather Scott, Montrose, CO
- Barbara Kruse, Alamosa, CO
- David Lee, Crestone, CO
- Tim Carden, Louisville, CO
- Diana Biggs, Canon City, CO
- Ron Garcia, Alamosa, CO
- David Jones, Monte Vista, CO
- Michael Gallagher, Englewood, CO
- Sue Norris, Louisville, CO
- Mary Duell, Denver, CO
- Debra Callahan, Del Norte, CO
- Jim Bailey, Lakewood, CO



### Are your annual membership dues due???????

We value your membership. Please renew today! The month and year when your membership dues are due is printed in **Bold** at the bottom of your address label or in your email. Please use the form below when mailing your payment or pay online at [slvrefuges.org](http://slvrefuges.org) **Thank you!**

### Membership Application

Please Choose One:      New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Street or P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check Payable to:  
**The Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges**  
 P.O. Box 857, Monte Vista, CO 81144

#### Annual Membership Category:

- Senior (62+) or Student \$15
- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Sponsor \$50
- Best Friend \$100+
- Life \$1000+



Friends of the San Luis Valley  
National Wildlife Refuges  
P.O. Box 857  
Monte Vista, CO 81144



Results of 2021 Monte Vista Christmas Bird Count, continued from page 5

Species	2021 Count	Record High Count	Record Year	Species	2021 Count	Record High Count	Record Year	Species	2021 Count	Record High Count	Record Year
<b>** High number</b>			<b>*** Unusual species and new to count</b>				<b>*cw = count week</b>				
American Crow	101	270	1971	Eurasian Collared-dove	124	237	1995	Peregrine Falcon	1	5	1960
American Goldfinch	1	143	2012	European Starling	468	3500	1986	Prairie Falcon	1	6	2020
American Kestrel	5	23	2015	Great Blue Heron	1	10	2009	Red-tailed Hawk	37	61	2020
American Robin	2	331	2006	Great Horned Owl	12	24	1995	Red-winged Blackbird	422	5111	1995
American Tree Sparrow	84	900	1986	Great-tail Grackle	8	47	2007	Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	29	440	2020
American Widgeon	2	75	1978	Green-wing Teal (American)	2	250	1987	Rosy Finch (Black)	3	4	2018
Bald Eagle	4	38	1991	Horned Lark	142	2500	1960	Rough-legged Hawk	9	56	1978
Belted Kingfisher	*cw	4	2006	House Finch	60	337	2017	Short-eared Owl	1	16	1966
Black-billed Magpie	172	1080	1961	House Sparrow	446	1660	1994	Song Sparrow	29	361	1977
Black-capped Chickadee	1	35	2011	Kildeer	2	8	1956	***Sora	*cw	3	2021
Brewer's Blackbird	9	1100	1960	Mallard	202	68,000	1960	Steller's Jay 	1	4	2019
Canada Goose	72	1450	1986	Mourning Dove	1	30	1961	Townsend's Solitaire	2	7	2006
Common Raven	58	212	2019	Northern Flicker	6	10	2016	Western Meadowlark	1	52	2020
Dark-eyed Junco	6	400	1986	Northern Harrier	9	63	1995	White-breasted Nuthatch	3	9	2020
**Downy Woodpecker	6	6	2021	Northern Shrike	1	3	2019	White-crowned sparrow	3	22	2006